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Proposition 29, the Tobacco Tax for Cancer Research Act of 2012, would impose an excise tax on cigarettes of \$1.00 per pack. These funds would be used to support research on cancer, heart disease, emphysema, and other tobacco-related diseases. Funding would also be directed towards tobacco prevention and cessation programs and to support law enforcement efforts to reduce illegal sales of tobacco to minors. The Legislative Analyst’s Office in Sacramento estimates that this measure would raise approximately \$735 million in the first year to support efforts to prevent tobacco use and to minimize the harms caused by tobacco.

The dangers posed to the health of our County’s residents by tobacco can not be understated. Tobacco use remains the single most preventable cause of disease, disability, and death in the United States. In Los Angeles County, tobacco use is directly linked to the top five causes of death, including 77 percent of lung cancer deaths and 85 percent of emphysema deaths. In total, approximately 9,000 deaths per year in our County are caused by tobacco use. The Department of Public Health (DPH) also notes that the harmful effects of smoking do not end with the smoker. An

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estimated 336,000 children and 585,000 nonsmoking adults throughout the County are exposed to secondhand smoke, which is associated with a wide variety of diseases and health problems.

In addition to the grievous toll that tobacco places on our County's health, tobacco use places a significant burden on our local economy. According to DPH, tobacco use in the County results in more than \$2.3 billion a year in medical costs and another \$2.0 billion a year from lost productivity. Looking at the overall costs of tobacco use, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention estimates that smoking-caused health costs and productivity losses total \$10.47 per pack sold.

California's current excise tax on cigarettes is one of the lowest in the country, well below the national average, and is one of only three state cigarette taxes that have not been raised since 1999. The California Tobacco Control Program estimates that Proposition 29 would increase the County's annual allocation for tobacco prevention and control activities by approximately \$16.7 million, to a total of \$18.9 million annually. In addition, DPH indicates that the increased price of tobacco products would lower the number of smokers in the County by nearly 90,000, by both reducing the number of youth who begin smoking and increasing the number of youth and adults who quit smoking. DPH estimates that this would result in more than 15,000 lives saved from tobacco-related deaths among residents 15 years and older in Los Angeles County alone.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors express its strong support for Proposition 29, the Tobacco Tax for Cancer Research Act of 2012, and urge the voters of California to vote YES on this ballot measure on June 5, 2012.